

Q1 is contemplated that the pads may be located in the corners, so the air
flow paths are located along the sidewalls rather than in the corners. ✓

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1 and 6-9 without prejudice or disclaimer

Add the following new claims 26-28:

1 26. A tube rack comprising:

2 a base having a top surface and oppositely facing side walls, said top surface
3 being subdivided into an array of tube-receiving openings, each of said side walls having a
4 trunnion protruding outwardly therefrom, with said trunnions being aligned coaxially; and

Q2 5 a cover having oppositely facing side walls, notches in said side walls having
6 downwardly facing openings, said cover being configured and dimensioned to be seated on
7 said base in a closed position enclosing said top surface, with said trunnions received in said
8 notches via said openings, said notches being defined by surfaces that coact with said trunnions
9 to accommodate (i) unimpeded vertical movement of said cover into and out of said closed
10 position, and (ii) limited rotation of said cover about said trunnions between said closed
11 position and an inclined open position providing access to said tube-receiving openings.

1 27. The tube rack of claim 26 wherein said downwardly facing openings are larger
2 than the maximum transverse dimensions of said trunnions.

3 28. The tube rack of claim 26 wherein said tube receiving openings communicate
4 with vertically disposed wells having open bottoms, and wherein said wells are provided

3 internally with mutually spaced support pads positioned to vertically support tubes received in
4 said wells via said openings.

Amend claims 2, 3, and 10 as follows:

1 2. (Amended) The tube rack of claim 26, wherein said openings include internal
2 mutually spaced pads, said pads being positioned to support tubes received in said openings,
3 while providing flow paths adjacent to the tubes through which air may pass.

1 3. (Amended) The tube rack of claim 26, wherein said pads have chamfered
2 concave surfaces.

1 10. (Amended) The tube rack of claim 26, further comprising:
2 first and second slide latches each having a lengthwise tongue; and
3 wherein the sidewalls of said base each include a slide surface comprising a lengthwise
4 groove that slidably mates with one of said lengthwise tongues of an associated one of said
5 slide latches, such that each of said slide latches moves lengthwise over its associated said slide
6 surface between latched and unlatched positions.

REMARKS

Claims 16-25 stand withdrawn.

The above noted changes to the drawings, specification and claims are believed to adequately address the examiner's objections.